supply of products besides handing critical issues during the transition period of deregulation.

(h) All the existing pipelines excluding strategic pipelines owned by IOC should be transferred to an independent company such as the Petronet India Limited so that all the marketing companies get fair and equitable access to these pipelines for movement of products.

(i) After implementation of the recommendation, the Committee has identified that there will be three market players, *e.g.*, IOC, HPC and BPC-IBP. It feels that at a later date, the possibility of a combination of HPC, BPC-IBP, CRL, MRL, and NRL should be explored through an umbrella of a holding company. This new entity will be equal in size to IOC and would not only provide good competition but could also emerge as a global player in competition with the international oil majors.

Hydro-Carbon Deposits in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry

869. SHRI P. SOUNDARARAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hydro-carbon deposits in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry have been mapped;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the regions where drilling is in progress; and

(d) the quantum of crude oil and natural gas being obtained in these States now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) As on 1.1.2000, twenty four oil and gas finds have been established in Tamil Nadu onshore of which seven are oil bearing, ten are oil and gas bearing and seven are gas bearing. No hydrocarbon deposits have been found in the Union Territory of the Pondicherry onshore.

(c) Currently, drilling is in progress at Kizhvalur, Nidur,

Vijayapuram, Kovilkalappal, Kamalapuram and Periyapattinam areas of Tamil Nadu.

(d) There is no production of oil and gas in the Union Territory of Pondicherry. The production of oil and gas in Tamil Nadu for the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is as under:—

	1998-99	1999-2000 (April-Dec.'99)
Crude Oil (Million Metric Ton (MMT)	0.365	0.283
Natural Gas (Million Standard Cubic Metre per day (MMSCMD)	0.292	0.357

Taxes Imposed on Diesel and Petrol

†870. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in present circumstances, the rates of different taxes imposed on diesel and petrol are required to be reduced in order to bring down the prices thereof in the country;

(b) if so, whether the concerned departments have been made aware of it;

(c) if so, whether any concrete proposal has been sent to reduce the rates of taxes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.